2021 MidStart Handbook
Applying for a Post Graduate Midwifery Student Position in NSW Health
Welcome

A warm welcome to the 2021 edition of the MidStart Handbook. NSW Health continues to build and sustain a strong midwifery workforce and we are delighted that you are considering becoming a midwife.

NSW Health’s Nursing and Midwifery Office coordinates MidStart. This is the state-wide recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital. This handbook will help you to apply for one of these positions. It is important to keep in mind that university enrolment to undertake midwifery studies is a separate process which you will undertake yourself.

We know that recruitment into MidStart is competitive. It is important to ensure that you submit the best application possible. My suggestion is to keep your mind open and make the most of the various training locations available to you.

Midwifery is a dynamic and rewarding career. Midwives practise within many models and settings to care for women and their families at a very significant time in their lives. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well as you embark on this new stage in your career.

Jacqui Cross
Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

Find out more at

Email MOH-Midwifery@health.nsw.gov.au
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2021 Midstart

Key recruitment dates

> Information about 2021 recruitment process available on the NSW Health website

> Applications open: **9am Wednesday 27 May**

> Applications close: **4pm Wednesday 10 June**
> Applicants for interview notified: **on Thursday 18 June**
> Applicants to accept/decline invitation to interview: **by Friday 26 June 2020**

> Interviews conducted between **1- 10 July**

> Recruitment outcome emailed to applicants: **Monday 24 August**
> Successful applicants accept or decline offers: **by Monday 31 August**

> Eligible Applicants’ Bank opens to employers: **Monday 7 September**
> Employment contracts sent to successful applicants: **by Friday 25 September**
What is a midwife?

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM, 2017) defines the midwife and their scope of practice. A midwife is recognised internationally as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife’s own responsibility and to provide care to the newborn and the infant. This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures.

Using the principles of midwifery continuity of care, primary health care and cultural safety, the midwife has an important task in health counselling and education, not only for the woman, but also within the family and community. This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to women’s health, sexual or reproductive health and child care. A midwife may practise in any setting including home, community, hospitals, clinics or health units.

“A Career in Midwifery”

“Being with women and families in that moment when they meet their baby is incredible and something I feel very privileged to be a part of.”

Registered Midwife
How to become a midwife

On entry to practice, the midwife is a regulated health practitioner who holds registration as a midwife with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA). In Australia, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) protects the title 'midwife'.

In NSW, there are two educational pathways to become a registered midwife:

1. Completion of a Bachelor of Midwifery program.
2. Completion of a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery.

A Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) is eligible to apply to the second pathway. In NSW Health, MidStart is the process used to access this pathway. MidStart is not applicable to the first pathway.

To become a midwife utilising the MidStart process registered nurses are enrolled in a recognised postgraduate university program at one of three NSW universities while being concurrently employed in a dedicated midwifery student position in a NSW public maternity service. A post graduate midwifery program varies between 12 and 18 months in length.

The salary paid as a postgraduate midwifery student (once verification has occurred) will reflect your years of service as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) and in accordance with the NSW Public Health System Nurses’ and Midwives’ (State) Award 2019.

“I’d long wanted to pursue a career in midwifery as a result of positive and influential experiences in midwifery placements as a nursing student. Once I made the change, I was genuinely welcomed and encouraged by the women, their families and our midwifery colleagues. At every stage of the clinical program I felt supported and nurtured by these colleagues to acquire the skills, language and confidence to work in true partnership with women and their families. It has been such a rewarding and fulfilling career move.

Postgraduate midwifery student
Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for MidStart you must be:

1. An Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident. (New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a current Special Category Visa are considered to have permanent residency status)

2. A Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the NMBA at the time of application.

Check your eligibility to apply for a MidStart position by completing the following survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MidStart2021

Being a post graduate midwifery student

Students are provided with a variety of midwifery practice experiences over the course of the program. This is inclusive of experience gained in providing continuity of care by establishing, maintaining and concluding a professional relationship with a number of women through their pregnancy, labour and birth, and the postnatal period. This clinical experience may, at times, be in addition to your contracted hours of employment.

A typical week will consist of:

• Allocating time for study and completion of university assessment tasks.

• Attending university classes – either one day a week or at residential school, depending on the university in which you are enrolled.

• Attending educational opportunities provided for midwifery students and other staff within your training hospital.

• Working closely with registered midwives and other clinicians in the development of midwifery skills.

• Using your diary to ensure that you have allocated time for your Continuity of Care experiences around your rostered shifts and university commitments.

• Negotiating with Midwifery Unit Managers to maximize your attendance at the births of the women you have recruited for your Continuity of Care experiences.

• Travel related to attending antenatal visits, births and postnatal care of your Continuity of Care women.

Self-care strategies will be important for you undertaking a program that combines work and study. A useful strategy is to consider the support that your family/close friends can provide during your year as a midwifery student. You may also experience some adjustments as you become accustomed to being a student again.

**"to achieve a balance between study, work and life I found having a diary and planning shifts and assignments, scheduling in activities to enjoy on days off ... exercising and getting enough sleep all helped.**

Postgraduate midwifery student
Preparation of Your Application

When preparing your application there are a number of things to consider including recruitment requirements, training and study locations, and addressing the selection criteria.

**Recruitment requirements**

As part of the NSW Health MidStart recruitment process you will be required to provide the following:

- **Curriculum Vitae**
  Outlining your educational qualifications and work experience.

- **Identification**
  Evidence of identification and permanent residency, such as passport, Australian birth certificate, and citizenship certificate and visa information.

- **Working with Children Check**
  A NSW Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance number for paid work [https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check](https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check). Applicants are required to enter the WWCC clearance number (or, at a minimum, application number for a WWCC) into the online application. All applicants are to provide a WWCC clearance number at interview for verification.

- **Immunisation**

- **Referee checks**
  Applicants must include the names and contact details of two referees, of which one referee must be your current or most recent manager. [https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_040.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_040.pdf)

**Choosing your training and study location**

Applicants have the opportunity to enter up to six preferred hospital sites in their online application. It is important that you carefully consider the hospital/s where you wish to apply for a midwifery student position, as well as your preferred education provider.

Some Local Health Districts/hospitals may have memorandums of understanding and partnerships with specific universities. This means that students studying at a particular university may only be able to undertake midwifery training at linked hospitals. It is important to determine any existing arrangements with both the universities and the hospitals prior to making your preferences in your application.

Training in rural hospitals may include periods of rotation to larger facilities to ensure you gain the required clinical experience. Consider the distance required to travel to your preferred hospital to complete Continuity of Care experiences as well as your rostered shifts. The three universities that offer a post graduate program in midwifery in NSW are:

- **Charles Sturt University**

- **University of Technology Sydney**

- **Western Sydney University**
  [https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/future-students/graduate/postgraduate/postgraduate_courses/nursing_courses](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/future-students/graduate/postgraduate/postgraduate_courses/nursing_courses)
**Selection Criteria**

As part of your application you will be asked to address **each of the six (6) selection criteria** demonstrating your ability to meet each one (up to a maximum of 150 words per criterion). Your responses will be reviewed as part of the selection process. It is important that you give each selection criteria thoughtful consideration.

Tip: The online application may time out before you have an opportunity to save your work. It is recommended that you prepare your responses in advance using a word document, then copy and paste these into the online application.

The Selection Criteria are:

1. Demonstrated understanding of the role of the midwife within a primary healthcare framework.
2. Demonstrated understanding and commitment to the requirements of the midwifery training program including Continuity of Care experience.
3. Demonstrated high level interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills that support effective collaboration across the interdisciplinary team.
5. Demonstrated understanding of NSW Health CORE Values – Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment in providing quality care to women and their babies.
6. Demonstrated understanding of the role of the midwife in applying work health & safety, infection control and quality improvement principles.


**Important Points:**

- The process of enrolling in a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery is your responsibility and completely separate to MidStart.
- Mid-year intakes are offered at a limited number of hospitals only and at one NSW university.
- Some positions may require a valid driver’s licence (eg: rural and community).
- If you are required to attend Residential School, this may not form part of your employment contract.
The Application and Recruitment Process

The following information is about application and recruitment via MidStart and in gaining employment as a midwifery student in a training location. Enrolment in a university placement is independent of this process and is your responsibility to apply to your preferred education provider separately.

Applying Online

Applications for the NSW Health 2021 MidStart will open from **9am Wednesday 27 May 2020** and close at **4pm on Wednesday 10 June 2020**.

**Apply to NSW Health 2021 MidStart program at:**

For assistance using the ROB Career Portal access the candidate application video. Go to https://jobs.health.nsw.gov.au/namo-ex

- Go to Apply Online
- **If you are a current employee of NSW Health,** log in using your Stafflink ID, then go to **Apply Now** within the job advertisement.
- **If you are not an employee of NSW Health,** go directly to **Apply Now** within the job advertisement. You will then be asked to select **New User** to register in the system. Go to **Returning user** to return to incomplete application.

Key points to remember:

1. **MidStart recruitment is competitive.** In some services, there are many more applications than positions. To increase the likelihood of a successful application, ensure you are flexible when choosing options for training positions and make best use of the opportunity to enter up to six hospitals in order of preference in your online application.

2. **Attention to detail is important.** Ensure you enter your personal details correctly which includes the first and last name you are known by. This information is used for employment screening purposes.

3. **You will need a valid email address.** Email is the primary communication in which employers will contact you throughout the recruitment process. Hotmail and Live.com email addresses are blocked by some employers so it is strongly recommended that you consider an alternative to these.

4. **Your online application must be submitted to be considered.** Ensure you complete each section of the application as prompted and submit the completed application prior to applications closing. Following the submission of your application, you will receive an email confirmation of your completed application.

5. **Editing your application.** There is opportunity to edit your online application after submission as many times as you like until applications close at **4pm on Wednesday 10 June 2020**. Once applications close, you will no longer have access to your application. Existing NSW Health employees can change personal information through StaffLink. External applicants can do so by updating your general profile on the ROB Career Portal. Changes to your referees can be updated at time of interview.

**Important Points:**

- Late applications will not be accepted.
- If an employer is unable to contact you due to incorrect contact details, your application may be withdrawn.
- Do not provide Hotmail and live.com email addresses in your contact details.
- You cannot commence employment as a postgraduate midwifery student if you are not enrolled in an appropriate university program.
Interview and selection

Interviews will be held statewide between Wednesday 1 July and Friday 10 July 2020. Specific times and dates will vary within this timeframe between locations. You will be invited to attend an interview by the training location you selected as first preference in the online application.

- Applicants will be invited to interview via email on Thursday 18 June 2020.
- Applicants must accept or decline their interview attendance by Friday 26 June 2020.

You will also receive a separate email titled ‘Pre-Employment checks’. Please click on the link within the email to complete this information.

Interviews are routinely attended in person. A telephone and/or Skype interview will only be offered upon request and is at the discretion of the interviewing facility. If you believe a phone interview is necessary for you, please contact the Local Health District/hospital of your first preference before completing your online application.

If you do not attend your interview and have not contacted the interviewing facility, your application will be withdrawn.

Recruitment outcomes

Applicants will be considered according to merit and selected following a competitive process. Applicants will be advised of their recruitment outcome by email on Monday 24 August 2020.

You will be advised of one of the following outcomes:

1. You are successful and have been offered a position at a particular hospital.
2. You have been placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank for allocation if positions become available.
3. You are not successful in this recruitment process. You are welcome to apply to future recruitment opportunities.

If you are successful, you will receive a second email Tuesday 25 August 2020 from the recruitment system containing the web link for you to accept your position. You will need to accept your position online by Monday 31 August 2020 or your offer will be withdrawn.

Once you submit your acceptance of the position, a screen confirmation will appear. Please save and/or print this screen confirmation and provide to the program coordinator on enrolment to university.

Remember: it is your responsibility to apply and enrol into a university program. It is also your responsibility to inform the program coordinator of your training location.

The University Program Coordinators are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ask@csu.edu.au">ask@csu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTS</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Vanessa.scarf@uts.edu.au">Vanessa.scarf@uts.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lluck@westernsydney.edu.au">lluck@westernsydney.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eligible Applicants’ Bank

If you have been placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank, you are eligible for employment but have not been allocated a position during first round selections. Employers use the Eligible Applicants’ Bank to fill vacant positions. Vacancies may occur due to positions being declined or applicants withdrawing from the recruitment. Managers are invited to fill vacancies drawing from the Eligible Applicants’ Bank from Monday 7 September 2020. The Eligible Applicants’ Bank remains open until the end of May 2021 or until all positions are filled; whichever occurs first.

Seeking feedback

All applicants are encourage to seek feedback. If you are placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank or made unsuccessful in this recruitment process you are encouraged to seek feedback from the contact person provided in your interview outcome letter. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about your areas for future development and increase your potential as a strong candidate if you wish to apply to MidStart in the future.
# MidStart Application Checklist

## Tick | Action

**Prior to Applications Opening:**

- Download and read MidStart Handbook.
- Am I eligible to apply to MidStart 2021? [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MidStart2021](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MidStart2021)
- Mark all key recruitment dates in my diary.
- Mark course application dates with my preferred university/ies in my diary.
- Discuss with current employer my intention to apply to MidStart.
- Choose my hospital preferences for training.
- Update my Curriculum Vitae.
- Seek permission from my two referees to provide contact details in my application.
- Read and familiarise myself with the six selection criteria (page 8 in handbook).
- Draft my responses in how I meet each selection criterion (max. 150 words) into a word document.
- Check my supplied email address is not Hotmail or @live.com.au

**When Applications Open:**

- Have my documents available for reference to complete application.
- Save any incomplete application so that I can return to it later to complete.
- Submit my completed application by 4pm Wednesday 10th June 2020.
- I have received an auto-generated email from NSW Health recruitment system, confirming successful submission of my application.
- I am available to attend interview at my preferred location (preference 1) between 1-10 July 2020.

**If successful in gaining an interview:**

- Confirm my attendance at interview by Friday 26 June 2020.
- Review the selection criteria and prepare for interview.
- Gather employment screening documents, as requested by the interviewing facility, ready to take along to interview.

**On offer of Employment:**

- Accept or decline offer of employment online by Monday 31 August 2020.
- If accepting offer, provide evidence of confirmed position to the program coordinator at my preferred university.
2021 MidStart Handbook FAQs

1. How can I check if I am eligible to apply for MidStart 2021?
   Go to the following link to check your eligibility to apply to MidStart https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MidStart2021
   For more information, refer to the MidStart Handbook, page 6.

2. I am an international student. Am I eligible to apply to MidStart?
   You must be an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident to apply to MidStart.

3. I live outside NSW. Am I eligible to apply to MidStart?
   Only universities and hospitals situated within NSW take part in MidStart. You must undertake employment as a midwifery student in NSW.

4. Can I start preparing my application before MidStart applications officially open on Wednesday 27th May 2020?
   Yes. Applications open online 27th May 2020. All applicants should prepare their application in advance of this date. When preparing your application there are a number of things to consider including recruitment requirements, training and study locations, and addressing the selection criteria. See the Applicants’ Checklist on page 11 of the MidStart Handbook for guidance.

5. I am in my final year of Bachelor of Nursing degree. Can I apply to MidStart?
   You must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board Australia as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) at the time you apply to MidStart.

6. Do I need experience as a Registered Nurse to apply to MidStart?
   Prior experience as a Registered Nurse is not included in the MidStart selection criteria. MidStart is a merit based competitive recruitment process. Employment history and clinical experience will be taken into consideration during the recruitment.

7. I would like to complete GradStart and MidStart at the same time. Is this possible?
   No. GradStart offers employment to support new graduate nurses and midwives transition to professional practice. MidStart is the recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital. These are two distinct programs. You cannot complete GradStart and MidStart at the same time. You may wish to apply to MidStart for next year’s intake during your current Nursing New Graduate year. You must be registered with the Nursing & Midwifery Board Australia as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) at the time you apply to MidStart.

8. Why am I applying to the NSW Health MidStart Program before I enrol in a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery at university?
   MidStart is the state-wide annual recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital. The recruitment process for MidStart commences the year BEFORE midwifery students commence employment and in advance of university enrolments opening. University enrolment to undertake midwifery studies is a separate process to MidStart. Enrolment procedures and timelines vary between the three NSW Universities who offer an approved postgraduate midwifery program. Please visit their respective web sites for key dates and further information.

9. I have missed the application closing date. Can I still apply?
   No. MidStart is a once yearly state-wide application and recruitment process. Applications close 4pm Wednesday 10 June 2020. Late applications will not be received. You are welcome to apply next year.
10. Can I request to be employed on reduced hours?
Employment contracts are determined so that students meet the requirements to gain midwifery registration with the National Board of Nursing and Midwifery. Requests to be employed at reduced hours must be discussed with the local MidStart Coordinator at your preferred facility and prior to interview.

11. Do I need to nominate all six preferences for training location in my application?
Applicants must nominate a minimum of one preference of training location in their application.

12. I have forgotten my password. How can I gain access to the system to complete my application?
If you are a paid employee or paid contractor with NSW Health, your password can be re-set by contacting the Statewide service desk on 1300 28 55 33. If you are not a paid employee or paid contractor with NSW Health, your password can be re-set either via the “forgot your password” link at login or, by contacting the Customer Experience Team on 1300 679 367.

13. This is the first time I have used the NSW Health Recruitment and Onboarding (ROB) Portal for a job application. Is there a resource to assist me to use this system?
Yes. For assistance using the Career Portal for your 2021 MidStart Application please access the candidate application video, click link https://jobs.health.nsw.gov.au/namo-ex

14. I have been successful in gaining a MidStart position. Does this mean that I will be automatically enrolled into the University of my Choice?
No. Application to MidStart for a midwifery student position is a separate process to university enrolment. You must apply to study at university separately. Refer to MidStart Handbook page 10.

15. I have received a letter from the Local Health District stating I am on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank. What does this mean?
Being placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank means that you are eligible for employment but are not allocated a position. This occurred because of a limited number of positions were available at your preferences. The Eligible Applicants’ Bank is open to employers from Monday 7 September 2020 to fill vacancies. These vacancies can occur because other applicants decline position offers or withdraw from the recruitment. The Eligible Applicants Bank will remain open until May 2021. To accept a position during second round, applicants must gain enrolment into an approved post graduate midwifery program at university.

16. I was not successful in gaining a MidStart position. Can I apply next year?
Yes. Eligible applicants who have been unsuccessful in gaining a MidStart position can apply again in the future. Applicants are encouraged to seek post interview feedback before re-applying for MidStart.

17. Do I need to resign from my job to accept a midwifery student position?
Successful MidStart candidates will be employed on a temporary contract by the Local Health District. Applicants should discuss with their current employer their intention to apply to MidStart and future employment arrangements.

18. Can I take unplanned leave or defer my MidStart program?
Discuss any unplanned leave or deferral from the MidStart program with your local MidStart Coordinator. Once a candidate is employed any position changes or requests are managed on an individual basis at the employing Local Health District.

19. If I need to attend a Residential School as part of my midwifery studies, will I be paid as a midwifery student to attend?
Contact your Local Health District MidStart Coordinator to discuss specific employment arrangements.